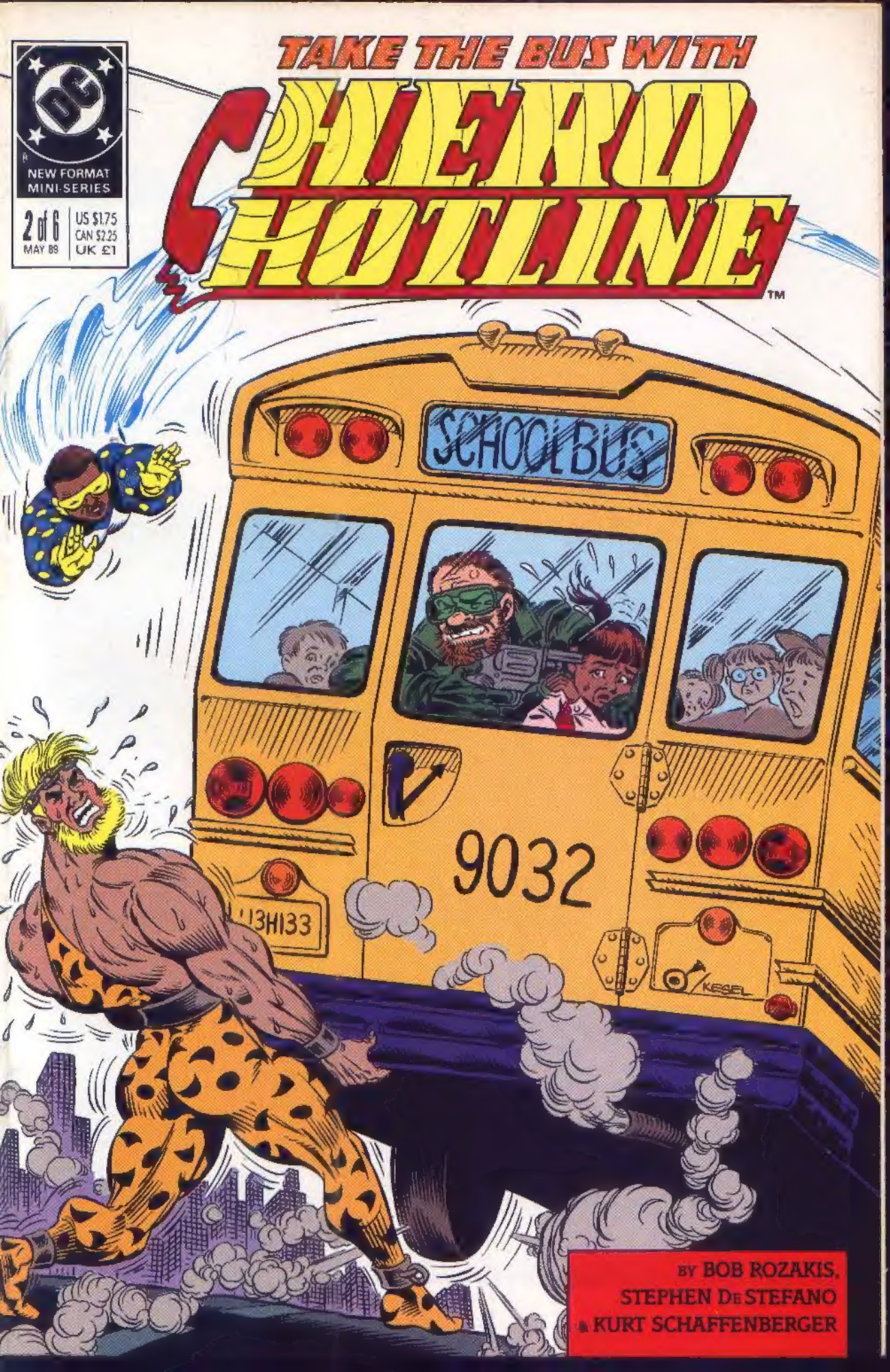
TAKE THE BUS WITH
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SCHOOL BUS
9032
KESEL
BY BOB ROZAKIS, STEPHEN DE STEFANO & KURT SCHAFFENBERGER

PREVIOUSLY IN HERO HOTLINE...
WE HAVE A BATTERED WIFE WHO'D LIKE A LITTLE HELP.
RIGHT UP MY ALLEY. I LOVE TO DEAL WITH BULLIES.
YOU SLUT! I'M OUT WORKIN' MY FINGERS TO THE BONE AND YOU GOT A MAN IN HERE?
NO, RALPH -- DON'T!
DON'T.
I FIND OUT YOU RAISED YOUR HAND TO HER AGAIN AND YOU'LL BE GOING A FEW ROUNDS WITH ME.
COUNT ON IT!
THEY SAY THEY WANT ME TO COME WITH THEM TO MARS AND BE THEIR QUEEN.
MY ASSOCIATE, FRED, WILL HIDE IN YOUR APARTMENT THIS EVENING (HAHAHA) AND WAIT FOR THEM (SNICKER).
G-45ZZ

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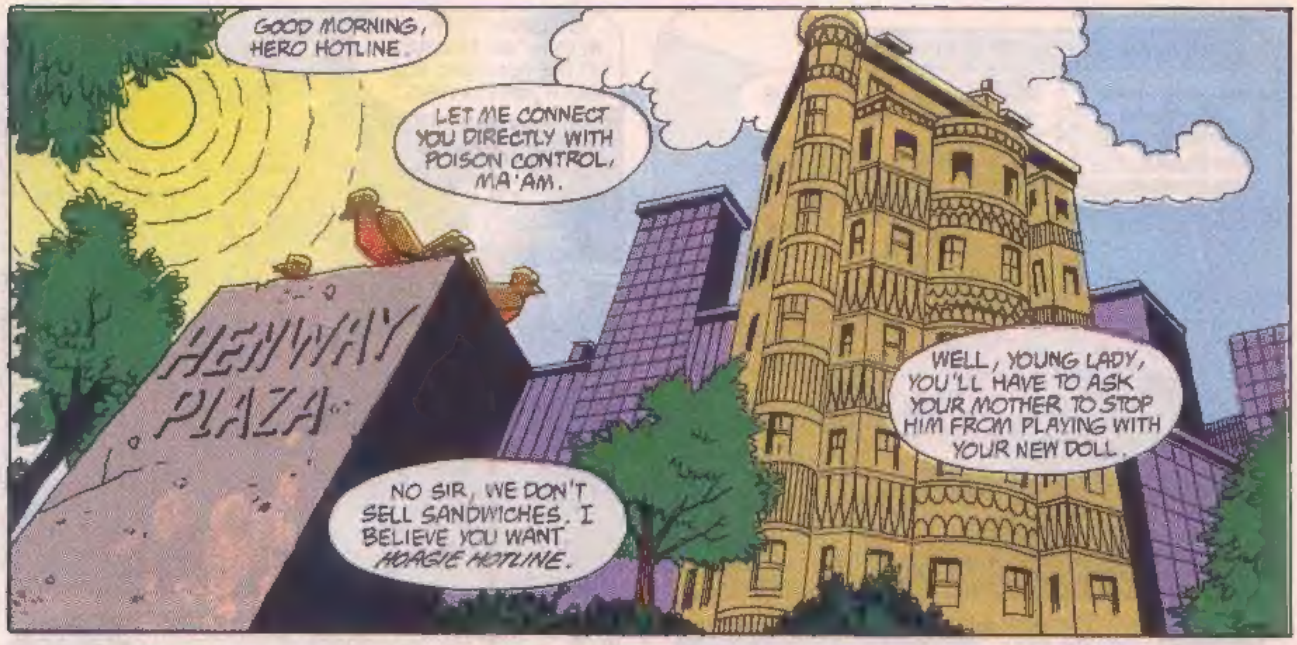
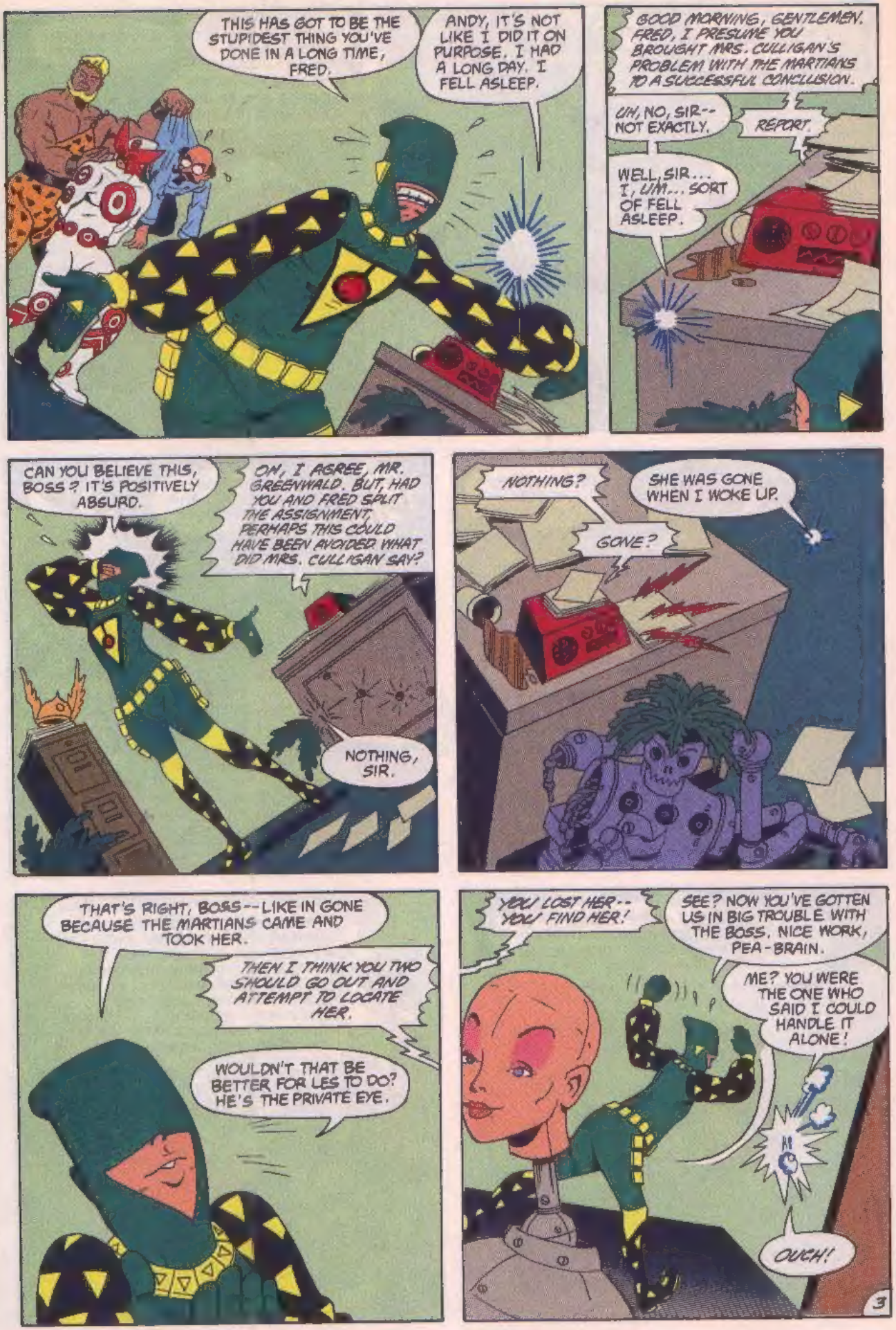
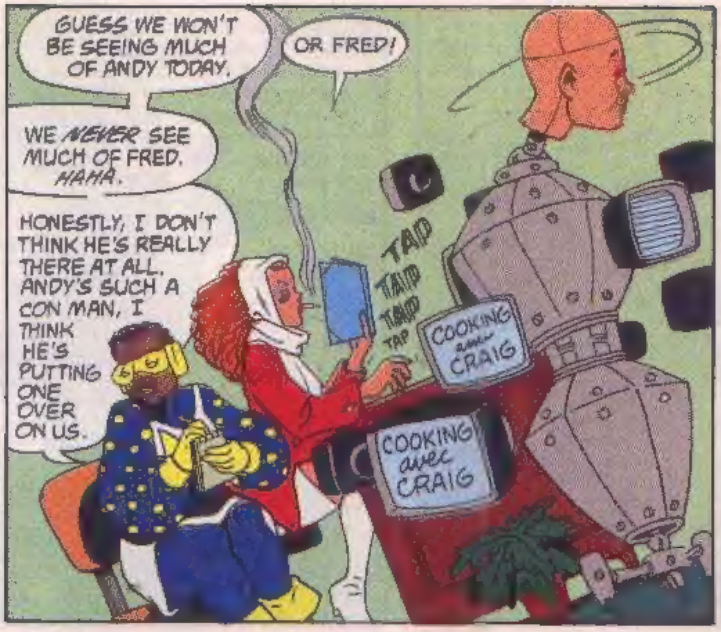

GOOD MORNING, HERO HOTLINE.
LET ME CONNECT YOU DIRECTLY WITH POISON CONTROL, MA'AM.
HEYWAY PLAZA
WELL, YOUNG LADY, YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK YOUR MOTHER TO STOP HIM FROM PLAYING WITH YOUR NEW DOLL.
NO SIR, WE DON'T SELL SANDWICHES. I BELIEVE YOU WANT HOAGIE HOTLINE.

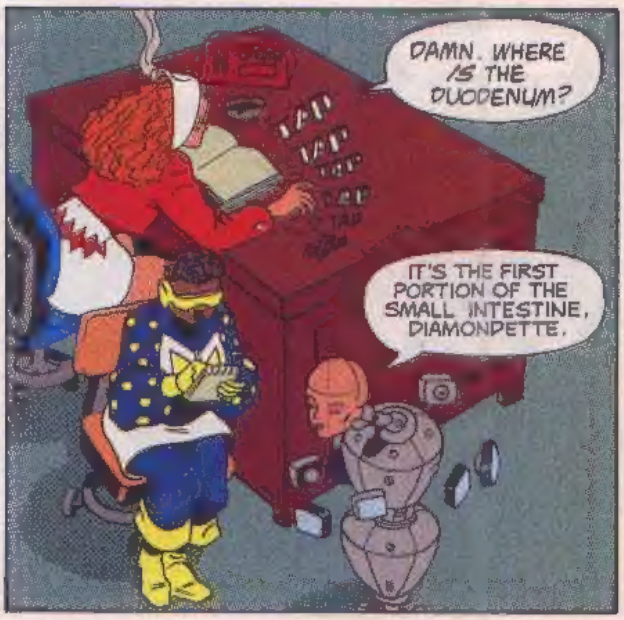
WHERE IS HE? I WANT TO SEE HIM.
MOM, I ALREADY TOLD YOU. YOU CAN'T SEE HIM.
MR. LEFFERTS, YOU WERE ASSIGNED TO THE NIGHT CREW.
WHAT KIND OF A MAN ARE YOU, ASSIGNING A YOUNG BOY TO WORK ALL NIGHT LONG, CHASING AFTER DANGEROUS CRIMINALS WHEN HE MIGHT GET HURT.

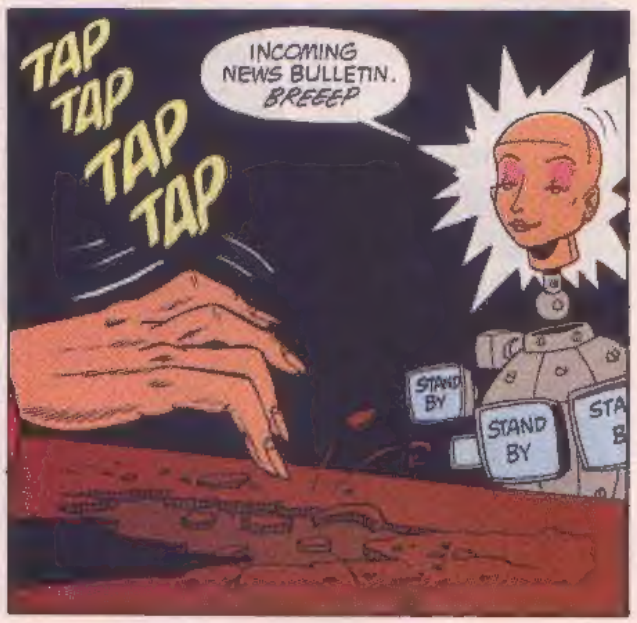
MRS. LEFFERTS, WE'VE HAD SIMILAR CONVERSATIONS IN THE PAST. YOUR SON IS LEGALLY AN ADULT. HE HAS SIGNED A CONTRACT AND IN IT HE AGREES TO WORK THE NIGHT SHIFT WHEN NECESSARY.
COOK: 9:25
CONTRACT, SHMONTRACT. MY BOY GETS HURT AND YOU'RE GOING TO BE HEARING FROM MY HUSBAND'S ATTORNEY.
WIPE THAT SMILE OFF YOUR FACE OR I'LL SET YOUR FANCY TIE ON FIRE!
MOM, CALM DOWN. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A STROKE.
YOU'RE RIGHT, BILLY, I'M GOING TO HAVE A STROKE WORRYING ABOUT YOU.
COME ON, MOM-- LET'S GET A NICE CUP OF TEA.


THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE STUPIDEST THING YOU'VE DONE IN A LONG TIME, FRED.
ANDY, IT'S NOT LIKE I DID IT ON PURPOSE. I HAD A LONG DAY. I FELL ASLEEP.
GOOD MORNING, GENTLEMEN. FRED, I PRESUME YOU BROUGHT MRS. CULLIGAN'S PROBLEM WITH THE MARTIANS TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION.
UH, NO, SIR-- NOT EXACTLY.
REPORT.
WELL, SIR... I, UM... SORT OF FELL ASLEEP.
CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS, BOSS? IT'S POSITIVELY ABSURD.
OH, I AGREE, MR. GREENWALD. BUT, HAD YOU AND FRED SPLIT THE ASSIGNMENT, PERHAPS THIS COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED. WHAT DID MRS. CULLIGAN SAY?
NOTHING, SIR.
NOTHING?
SHE WAS GONE WHEN I WOKE UP.
GONE?
THAT'S RIGHT, BOSS--LIKE IN GONE BECAUSE THE MARTIANS CAME AND TOOK HER.
THEN I THINK YOU TWO SHOULD GO OUT AND ATTEMPT TO LOCATE HER.
WOULDN'T THAT BE BETTER FOR LES TO DO? HE'S THE PRIVATE EYE.
YOU LOST HER-- YOU FIND HER!
SEE? NOW YOU'VE GOTTEN US IN BIG TROUBLE WITH THE BOSS. NICE WORK, PEA-BRAIN.
ME? YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID I COULD HANDLE IT ALONE!
OUCH!
3


GUESS WE WON'T BE SEEING MUCH OF ANDY TODAY.
OR FRED!
WE NEVER SEE MUCH OF FRED. HAHA.
HONESTLY, I DON'T THINK HE'S REALLY THERE AT ALL. ANDY'S SUCH A CON MAN, I THINK HE'S PUTTING ONE OVER ON US.
TAP TAP TAP TAP
COOKING with CRAIG
COOKING with CRAIG

IF HE IS, THE BOSS WON'T STAY FOOLED FOR LONG.
HOW'S THE EYE? STILL HURT?
NOT AS MUCH AS THE GRADE I GOT ON MY LAST ANATOMY EXAM.
ANATOMY


DAMN. WHERE IS THE DUODENUM?
IT'S THE FIRST PORTION OF THE SMALL INTESTINE, DIAMONDETTE.

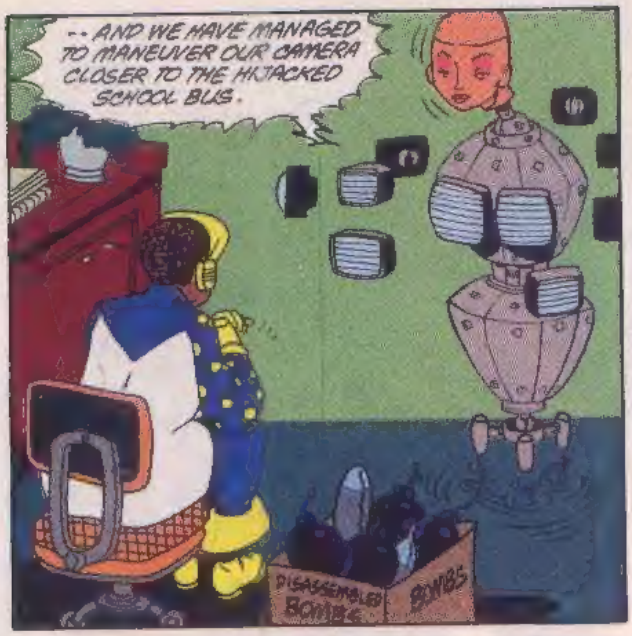

TAP TAP TAP TAP
INCOMING NEWS BULLETIN. BREEEP
STAND BY
STAND BY

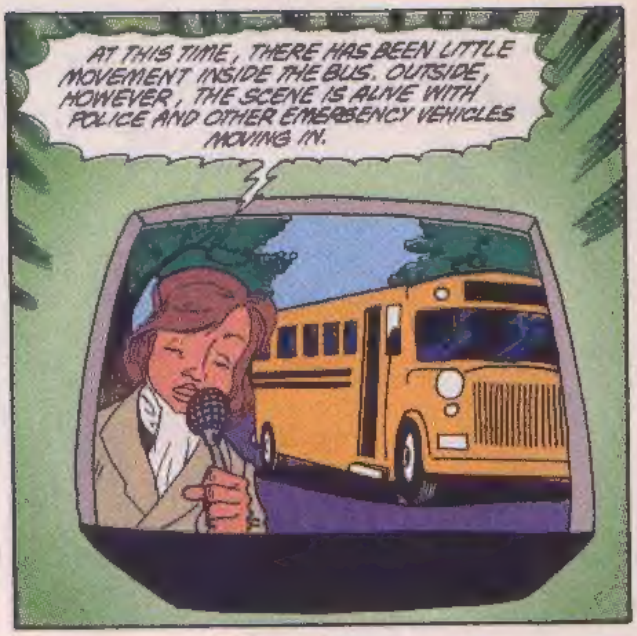
I'M STANDING AT THE CORNER OF 108TH STREET AND CORNWALL AVENUE, JUST HALF A BLOCK FROM THE SCENE OF A SCHOOL BUS HIJACKING.

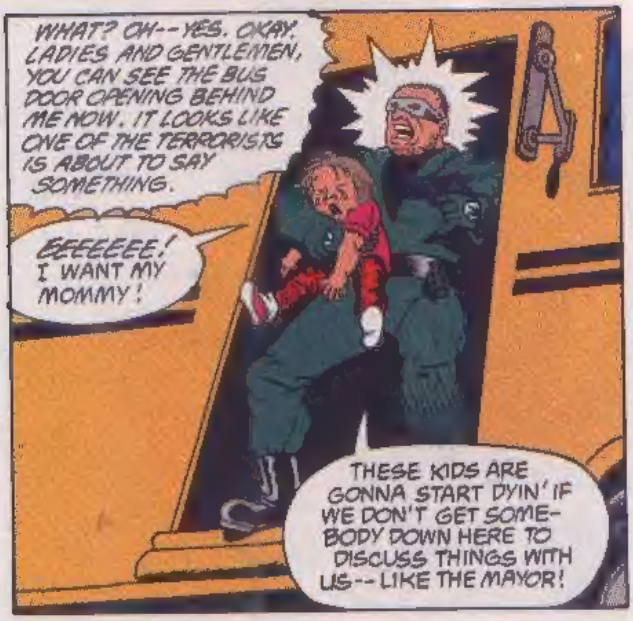
THREE MASKED GUNMEN, CALLING THEMSELVES THE UNITED FIGHTERS FOR FREEDOM, FLAGGED DOWN THE BUS AS IT WAS APPROACHING THE CORNWALL AVENUE SCHOOL, CLIMBED ABOARD AND ANNOUNCED THEY WOULD HOLD ITS GRADE SCHOOL PASSENGERS UNTIL THEIR DEMANDS WERE MET.
4

JUST WHAT THOSE DEMANDS ARE HAS NOT BEEN MADE KNOWN TO THIS REPORTER, BUT WHAT IS PLAINLY OBVIOUS IS THE TERROR IN THE FACES OF THESE LITTLE HOSTAGES.
SCHOOL BUS
EEEK! THAT'S MY RUTHIE!
MY KIDS ARE ON THAT BUS. I'VE GOT TO GO HELP THEM.
MRS. JACKSON-- STOP!
WHAT--?
I WANT YOU TO SIT DOWN AND STAY HERE, MRS. JACKSON. THE APPEARANCE OF A SUPERHERO ON THE SCENE COULD MAKE MATTERS MORE DANGEROUS THAN THEY ALREADY ARE.
AREN'T YOU LISTENING? THOSE ARE MY KIDS!
I UNDERSTAND, MRS. JACKSON. BUT THIS TIME, I THINK IT BEST THAT YOU LET THE PROPER AUTHORITIES HANDLE THIS.
C'MON, BELLE. IT'LL BE OKAY. HARRY KNOWS WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT.
5

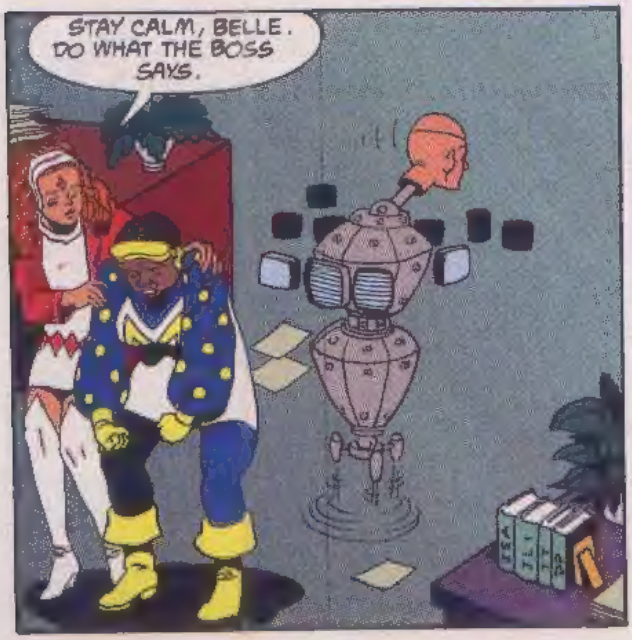
I HOPE SO, TOM. IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO MY KIDS...
YOU JUST STAY COOL, BELLE.
WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE MOPING--LOOK AROUND. SEE IF YOU CAN FIND ANYTHING.
I CAN'T PICK ANYTHING UP, ANDY--YOU KNOW THAT.
SO LOOK ON THE FLOOR FOR DIRT OR FOOTPRINTS OR SOMETHING.
HOME HOME HOME
HER CLOTHES ARE ALL HERE. NOT LIKE SHE DECIDED TO TAKE A TRIP OR ANYTHING.
MAYBE THEY TOLD HER SHE'D GET A REGAL WARDROBE.
YOU'RE A BIG HELP.
LOOKS LIKE SHE JUST PUT DOWN HER BOOK AND WENT FOR A WALK.
TO MARS?
BE REAL, FRED. YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE THERE ARE MARTIANS, DO YOU?
THE WHOLE IDEA IS...
...UH-OH.
6

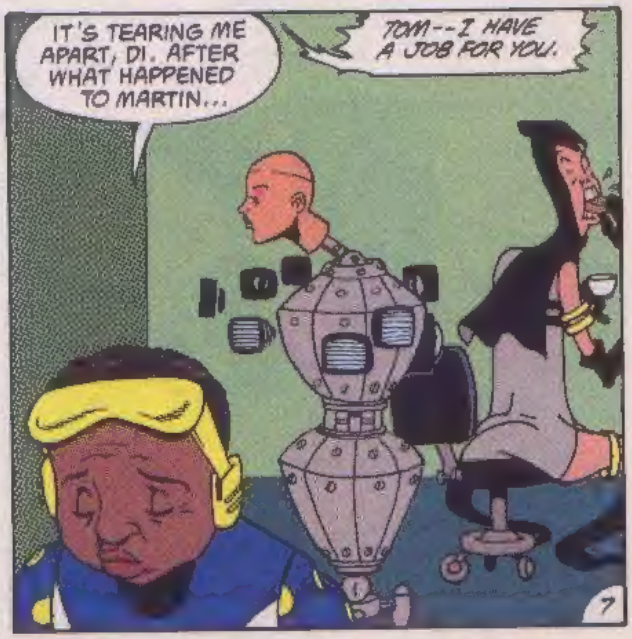

-- AND WE HAVE MANAGED TO MANEUVER OUR CAMERA CLOSER TO THE HIJACKED SCHOOL BUS.
DISASSEMBLED BOMBS


AT THIS TIME, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE MOVEMENT INSIDE THE BUS. OUTSIDE, HOWEVER, THE SCENE IS ALIVE WITH POLICE AND OTHER EMERGENCY VEHICLES MOVING IN.


WHAT? OH-- YES. OKAY. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, YOU CAN SEE THE BUS DOOR OPENING BEHIND ME NOW. IT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THE TERRORISTS IS ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING.
EEEEEEEE! I WANT MY MOMMY!
THESE KIDS ARE GONNA START DYIN' IF WE DON'T GET SOME-BODY DOWN HERE TO DISCUSS THINGS WITH US-- LIKE THE MAYOR!

I KNOW THAT LITTLE GIRL. SHE'S IN RUTHIE'S CLASS.
I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING.


STAY CALM, BELLE. DO WHAT THE BOSS SAYS.


IT'S TEARING ME APART, DI. AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO MARTIN...
TOM-- I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU.

DON'T TELL ME. IT'S A...
...CAT IN A TREE, CORRECT.
HARRY, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT GETTING CATS OUT OF TREES?
THEY'RE MUCH BETTER SUITED FOR FIGHTING FIRES, DON'T YOU THINK?
YEAH, AND I'M BETTER SUITED FOR CLEANING BACKED-UP SINKS -- BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I WANT TO DO IT!
THE ADDRESS IS 177 MAPLE GROVE--
LINE FOR APPLICANTS
SOOZ, I'M ON THE PHONE.
GOOD MORNING. ELOISE LONGACRE, PLEASE.
HI, HON, IT'S DAD. GOT TO BREAK OUR LUNCH DATE UNLESS YOU CAN TAKE A LATE ONE.
APPLICATION
POWERS:
BIRDCALL
STRETCH--177 MAPLE GROVE AVEN...
HANG ON, HON.
SOOZ, I'M ON THE PHONE! THIS IS NOT AN EARTH-SHAKING EMERGENCY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT. IT'S A BLASTED CAT STUCK UP IN A TREE!
NOW, SHUT UP TILL I GET OFF THE PHONE!
GOT TO GO, HON. I'LL GIVE YOU A CALL LATER... OKAY... BYE-BYE.
177 MA--
--MAPLE GROVE AVENUE. I HEARD YOU THE FIRST TWO TIMES!
8

RING! RING!

I'M GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS NONSENSE. GETTING CLOSE TO RETIREMENT, HARRY.

RING!

NOW REMEMBER, MR. BARTOLI. LET *ME* DO ALL THE TALKING.

WHATEVER YOU SAY, MR. SCHUSTER.

HEY, YOU-- WHERE DO I FIND THE BIG GUY? BROTHER BICEP OR WHATEVER HE'S CALLED?

I THOUGHT I WAS DOING THE TALKING.

IN A MINUTE.

I'M SORRY, SIR. BROTHER BICEP IS NOT AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW. PLEASE STATE YOUR BUSINESS.

I AIN'T TALKING TO A *WALKING ANSWERING MACHINE*. WHERE'S THE BIG SLIMEBALL?

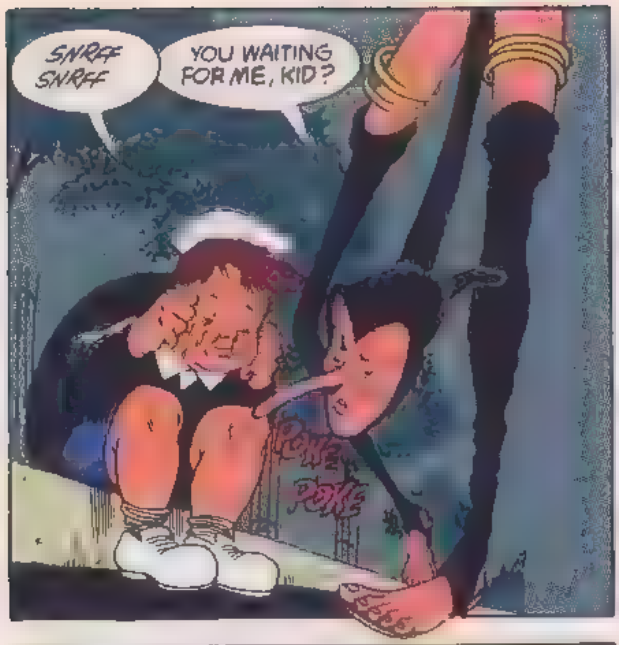
MR. BARTOLI-- PLEASE, REMEMBER YOUR INJURY.

OH, YEAH... RIGHT.

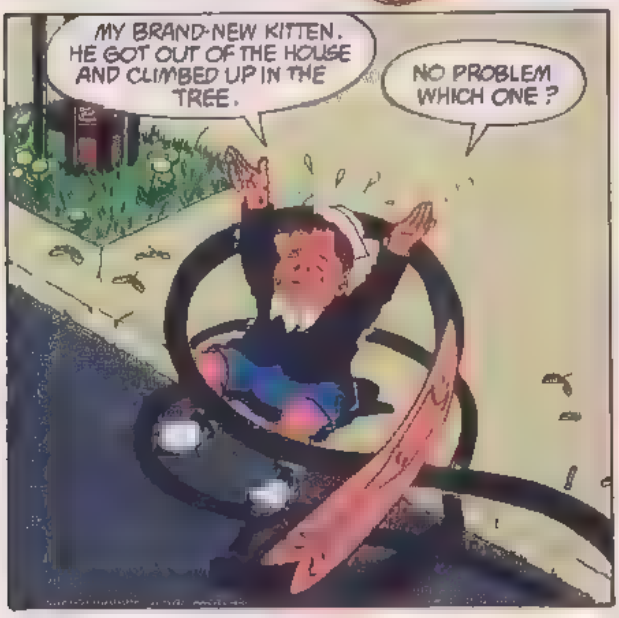
WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE BIG TOUGH GUY. DECIDE TO TRY FIGHTING MAN-TO-MAN?

THAT'S THE GUY. THAT'S THE GUY I FOUND WITH MY WIFE
SQUISH
OH, WE'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT IN THIS ONE
WHO'S THIS? YOUR BACK-UP?
ERIC F SCHUSTER, ATTORNEY AT LAW, REPRESENTING MR BARTOL! IN HIS LAWSUIT AGAINST YOU.
YOU MEAN, WHEN I STOPPED HIM FROM SLUGGING HIS WIFE?
MY CLIENT IS FILING A SUIT FOR THE INJURY YOU CAUSED HIM ON THE FIFTEENTH OF THIS MONTH WHEN YOU GRABBED HIS ARM
SKISH!
FURTHER, WE ARE CONSIDERING FILING CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST YOU.
YOU HAVEN'T MUCH OF A CASE, MR SCHUSTER
HJNH? WHO'S THAT?
DOOR. 10:47
I AM MR. BUTTERFIELD'S EMPLOYER I ASSIGNED HIM TO THE BARTOL! CASE
FINE. THEN YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS ACTIONS THAT MEANS I CAN PUT YOUR WHOLE OPERATION OUT OF BUSINESS HERE
I SERIOUSLY DOUBT THAT.
YOU JUST WAIT AND SEE
10

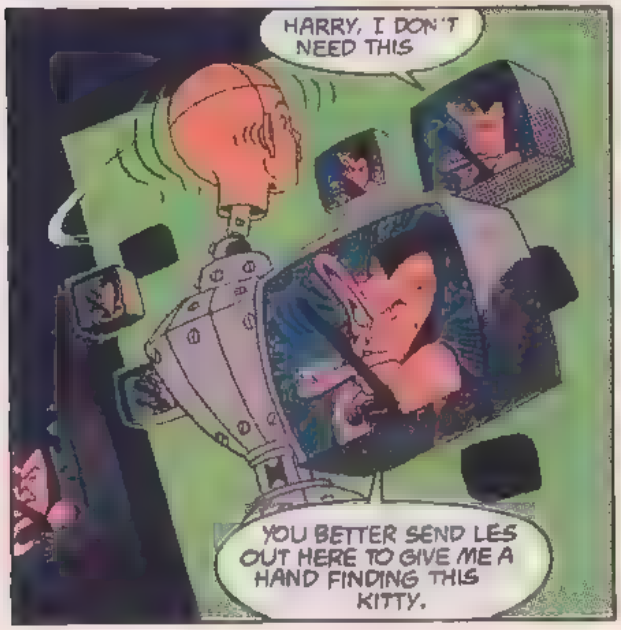
COME BACK AGAIN SOON. WE CAN DO LUNCH! HARHAR!
THAT WILL BE ENOUGH, MR BUTTERFIELD
SOOZ--STOP ZIPPING AWAY. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE BUS.
SORRY, MICROWAV-ABELLE
--AND THE SCENE RIGHT NOW IS ONE OF TENSE NEGOTIATION
Sliiiip
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ARE OFFERING TO EXCHANGE THEMSELVES AS HOSTAGES SO THAT THE CAPTIVE SCHOOLCHILDREN CAN BE FREED.
THERE'S NO NEED TO TERRORIZE HELPLESS CHILDREN. YOU NAME THE NUMBER OF ADULT HOSTAGES YOU'D LIKE AND WE'LL COMPLY
FORGET IT, FUZZ. THESE KIDS ARE OUR TICKET TO WHAT WE WANT. AND IF YOU DON'T START ACTING REAL FAST--LIKE IN 30 MINUTES--SOME OF 'EM ARE GOING TO GET HURT
YOU HEAR ME? THIRTY MINUTES.
OH, DEAR
I DON'T NEED THIS GARBAGE. I SHOULD BE HOME COLLECTING SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKS.


SNIFF SNIFF
YOU WAITING FOR ME, KID?
POKE POKE

ARE YOU A SUPERHERO?
YOU CALLED FOR ONE DIDN'T YOU?
SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? YOUR CAT'S MISSING?

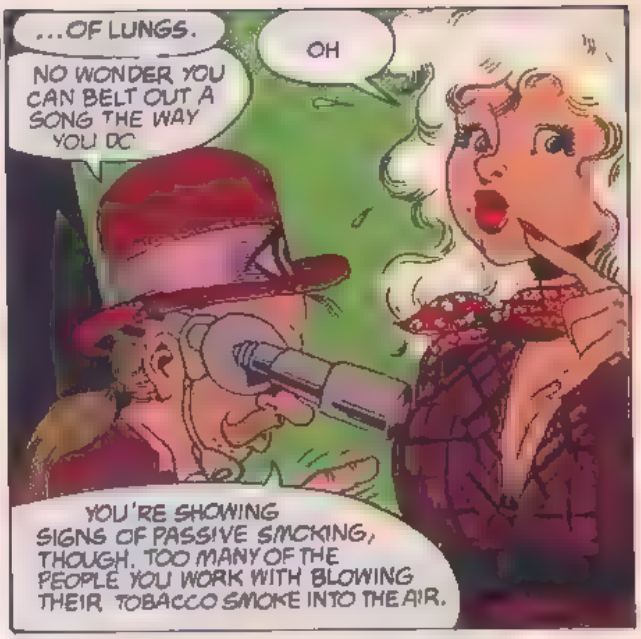

MY BRAND-NEW KITTEN. HE GOT OUT OF THE HOUSE AND CLIMBED UP IN THE TREE.
NO PROBLEM WHICH ONE?

I DON'T KNOW


HARRY, I DON'T NEED THIS
YOU BETTER SEND LES OUT HERE TO GIVE ME A HAND FINDING THIS KITTY.

YOU'LL HAVE TO WING IT, TOM--

--MR. LEE IS BUSY RIGHT NOW
WHY, LESTER, I DIDN'T THINK YOU EVER NOTICED.
MELANIE SWEETUMS, HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU YOU'VE GOT QUITE A PAIR...


...OF LUNGS.
OH
NO WONDER YOU CAN BELT OUT A SONG THE WAY YOU DO
YOU'RE SHOWING SIGNS OF PASSIVE SMOKING, THOUGH. TOO MANY OF THE PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH BLOWING THEIR TOBACCO SMOKE INTO THE AIR.

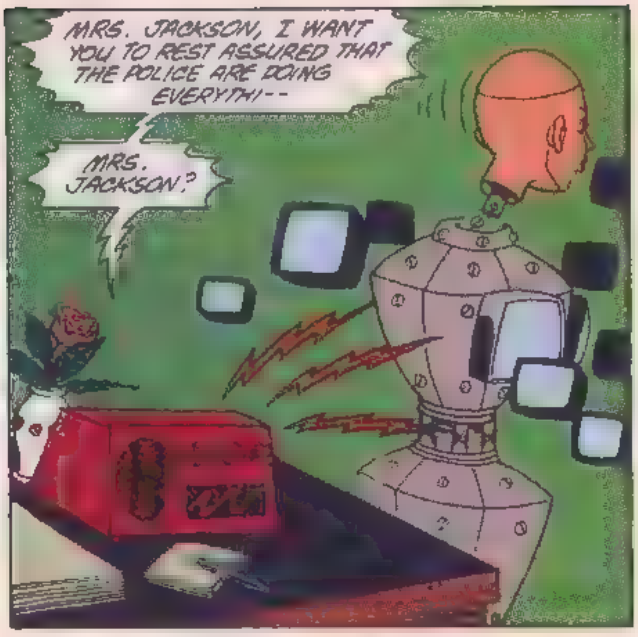
YOU REALLY SHOULD TELL THEM TO STOP
HONEY-PIE, YOU ARE JUST SO DOWNRIGHT CONSIDERATE.

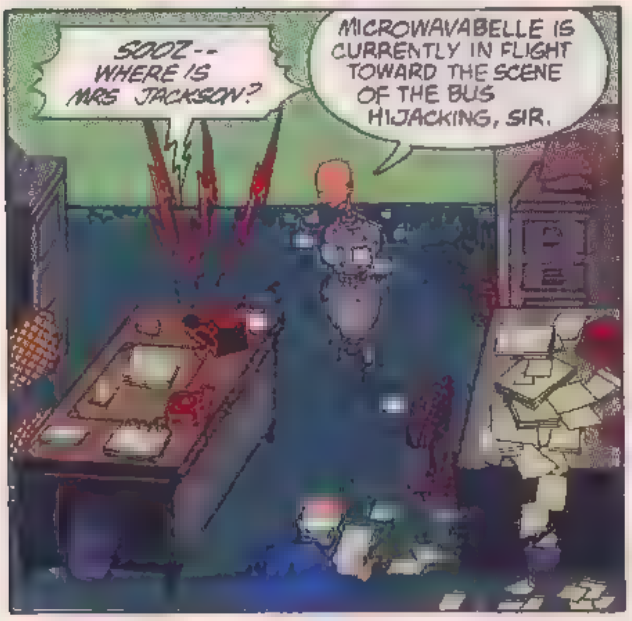
MR LEE, I HAVE AN ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU.
LET ME JUST GIVE YOU A BIG KISS--
YOUR SKILLS ARE NEEDED TO LOCATE A MISSING WILL

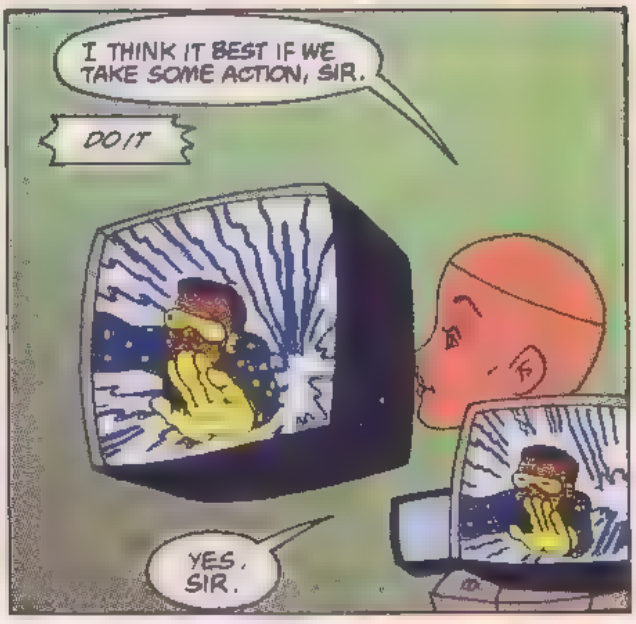
THE ADDRESS IS 1678 CHILTON STREET, APARTMENT 6-C, PRIVATE EYES
GOT TO RUN, DEAR. DUTY CALLS

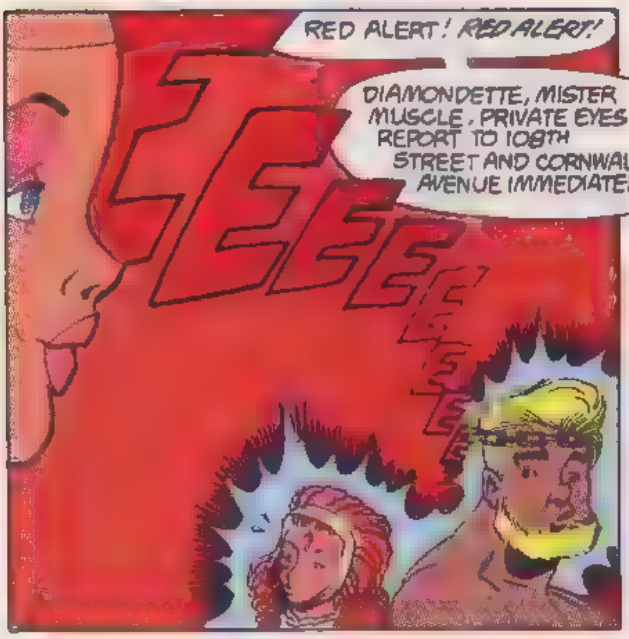
DON'T FORGET OUR DINNER DATE, SNOOKUMS. WE HAVE TO SEE SOME BANDS AND PICK ONE FOR OUR WEDDING.
UM-HUM

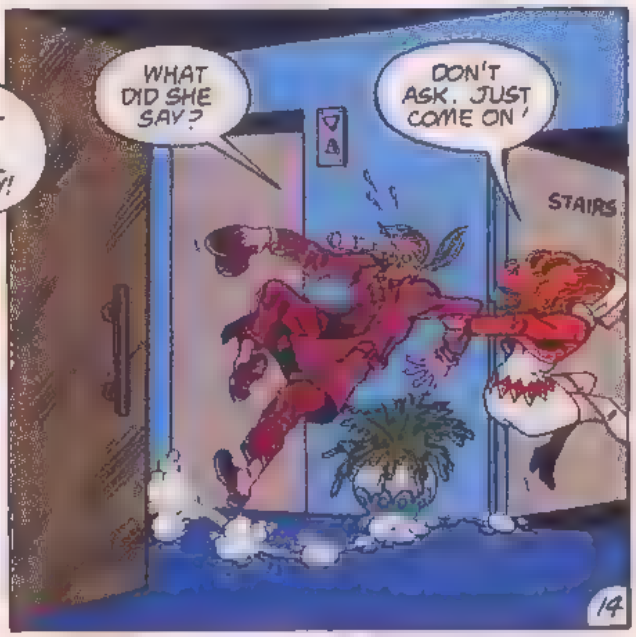
TIME'S RUNNING OUT. YOU GOT FIFTEEN MINUTES BEFORE THESE KIDS START HURTIN' SOMETHIN' BAD.


MRS. JACKSON, I WANT YOU TO REST ASSURED THAT THE POLICE ARE DOING EVERYTH!--
MRS. JACKSON?


SOOZ-- WHERE IS MRS JACKSON?
MICROWAVABELLE IS CURRENTLY IN FLIGHT TOWARD THE SCENE OF THE BUS HIJACKING, SIR.


I THINK IT BEST IF WE TAKE SOME ACTION, SIR.
DO IT
YES, SIR.


RED ALERT! RED ALERT!
DIAMONDETTE, MISTER MUSCLE, PRIVATE EYES-- REPORT TO 108TH STREET AND CORNWALL AVENUE IMMEDIATELY!
EEEEEEEEEEEE

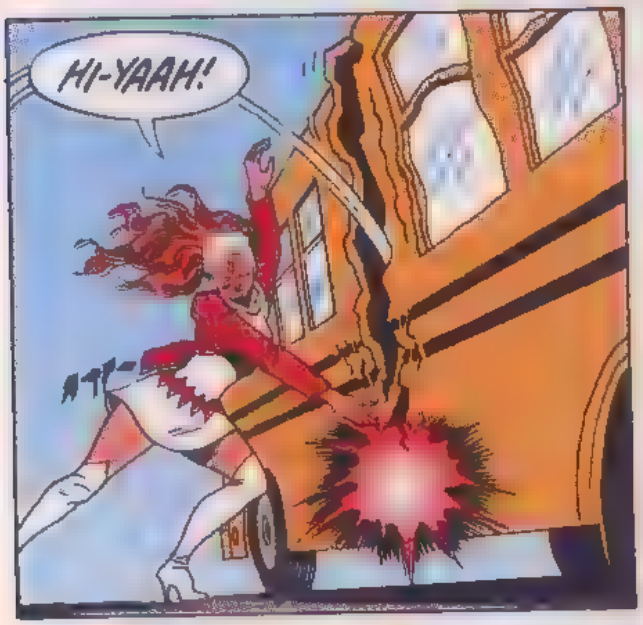

WHAT DID SHE SAY?
DON'T ASK. JUST COME ON!
STAIRS

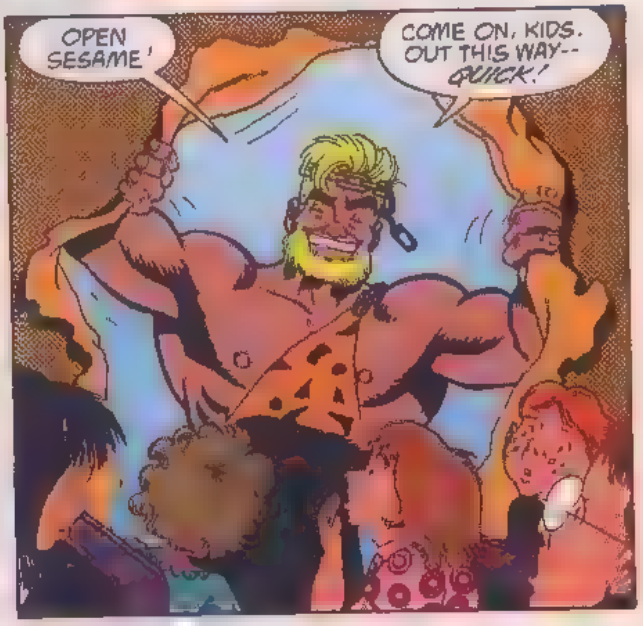
WHO THE HECK IS THAT?
IT SURE AIN'T WONDER WOMAN!
BACK OFF, LADY. YOU COSTUMED TYPES AIN'T SCARIN' ME ANY MORE THAN ALL THESE COPS ARE.
IT'S MY MOMMY!
RUTHIE--SIT DOWN AND BE QUIET
YOUR MA, HUNH?
COME WITH ME, KIDDO!
!!!!EEEE!
JOEY--CHECK THIS OUT!
BUS
HEY, WOMAN THIS BELONG TO YOU?
DON'T HURT HER.. PLEASE!
MAKE ME!
15

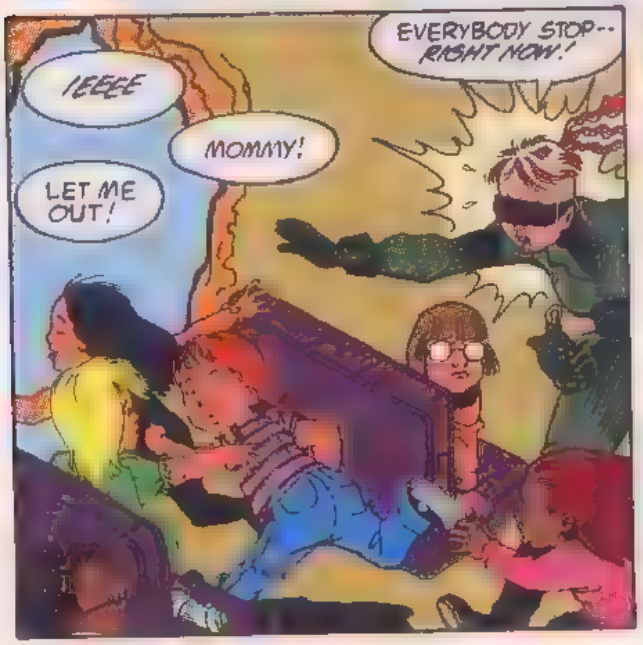
A LITTLE MICROWAVE POWER SHOULD MAKE HIS KNIFE TOO HOT TO HANDLE
YEOWWW!
ENOUGH WITH THE FUNNY STUFF, ALL OF YOU. ONE MORE STUPID MOVE AND I'M BLOWING THIS BUS AND EVERYBODY ON IT TO KINGDOM COME!
YOU'VE GOT TO LISTEN TO HIM, LADY. I KNOW YOU'RE TRYING TO HELP, BUT IF WE DON'T BACK OFF NOW, SHE COULD KILL THEM ALL.
PLEASE, COME BACK BEHIND THE LINE WITH US.
BETTER DO WHAT HE SAYS, LADY, OR YOUR LITTLE DARLING AIN'T GONNA BE CALLING "MOMMY" EVER AGAIN.
OWWWW!
NO!
16

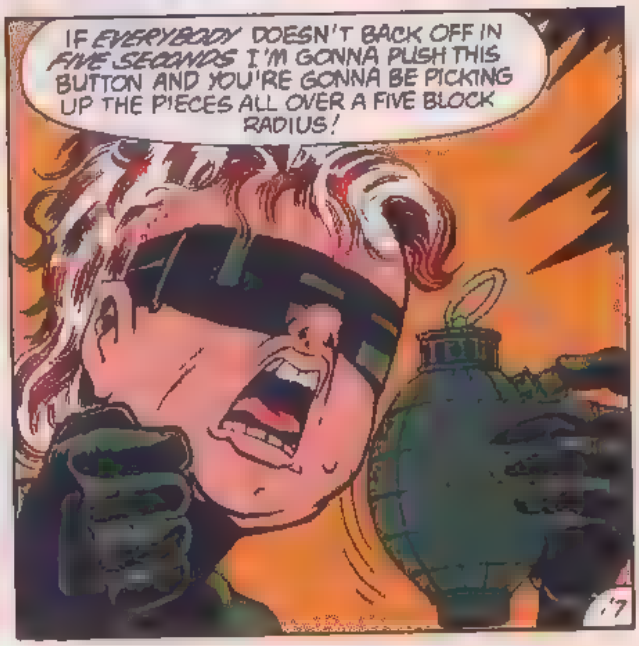
OKAY, WHILE THEIR ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON MOM AND THE COPS, LET'S MOVE IN CLOSE.
YOU GUYS READY?

DO IT, DI!


HI-YAAH!


OPEN SESAME!
COME ON, KIDS. OUT THIS WAY-- QUICK!


EVERYBODY STOP-- RIGHT NOW!
EEEE
MOMMY!
LET ME OUT!


IF EVERYBODY DOESN'T BACK OFF IN FIVE SECONDS I'M GONNA PUSH THIS BUTTON AND YOU'RE GONNA BE PICKING UP THE PIECES ALL OVER A FIVE BLOCK RADIUS!

I SAID BACK OFF-- NOW!

HMMM.

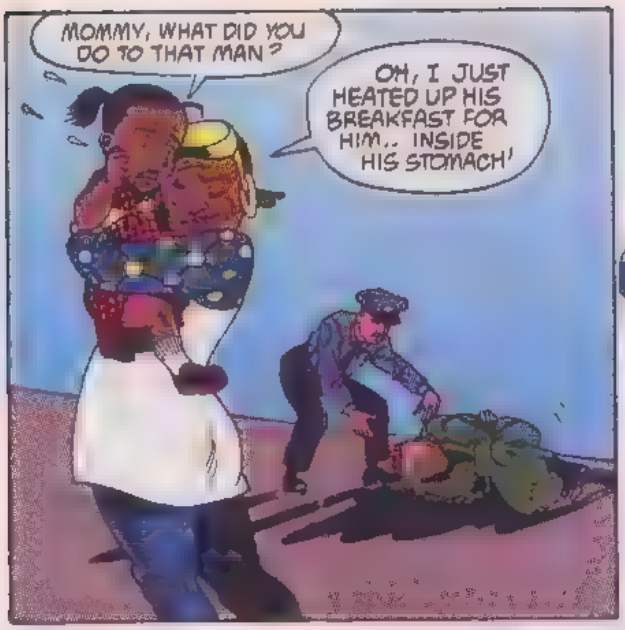
OKAY, LADY, WE'RE MOVING BACK. YOU JUST BE NICE AND CAREFUL WITH THAT FINGER, OKAY. SEE? WE'RE MOVING BACK!

IT'S A FAKE!

LET GO OF MY DAUGHTER, YOU SLIMEBUCKET!

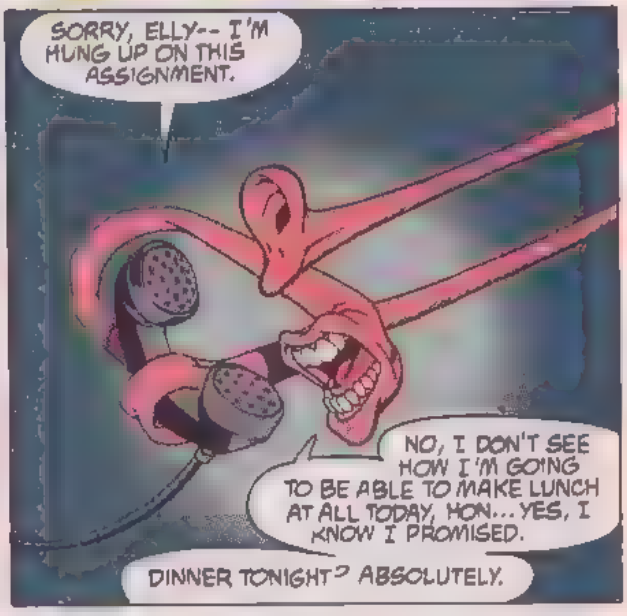
OHHWWWW

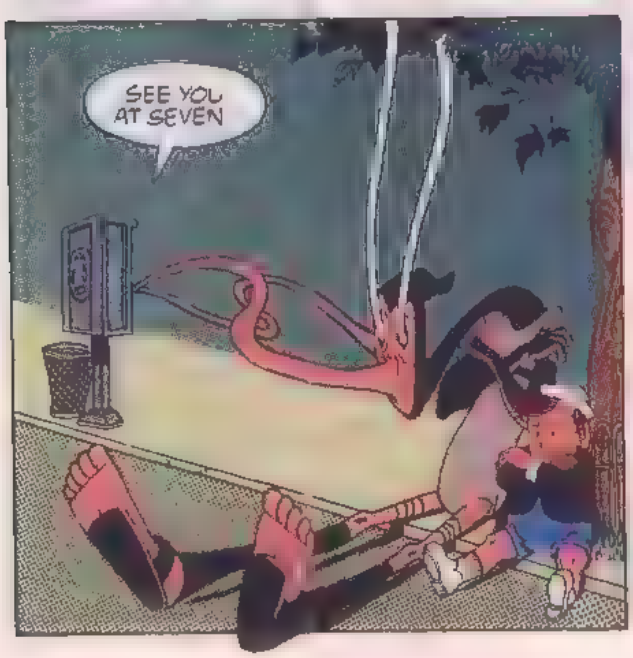
HERE, LET ME HELP YOU PUSH THAT BUTTON.
MY HAND-- MY HAND!
NOBODY'S GETTING OUT OF HERE WHILE I STILL HAVE MY GUN.
GOOD THING YOU DON'T HAVE IT ANY MORE!
SLICE
HI-YAHHH!
ALL UNITS, MOVE IN. BE CAREFUL OF THE CHILDREN.


MOMMY, WHAT DID YOU DO TO THAT MAN?
OH, I JUST HEATED UP HIS BREAKFAST FOR HIM.. INSIDE HIS STOMACH!

MOM!
THAT WAS MEATO, MOM

AS LONG AS YOU KIDS ARE SAFE, THAT'S WHAT MATTERS.
ALL CLEAR ALL CLEAR!


SORRY, ELLY-- I'M HUNG UP ON THIS ASSIGNMENT.
NO, I DON'T SEE HOW I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO MAKE LUNCH AT ALL TODAY, HON... YES, I KNOW I PROMISED.
DINNER TONIGHT? ABSOLUTELY.

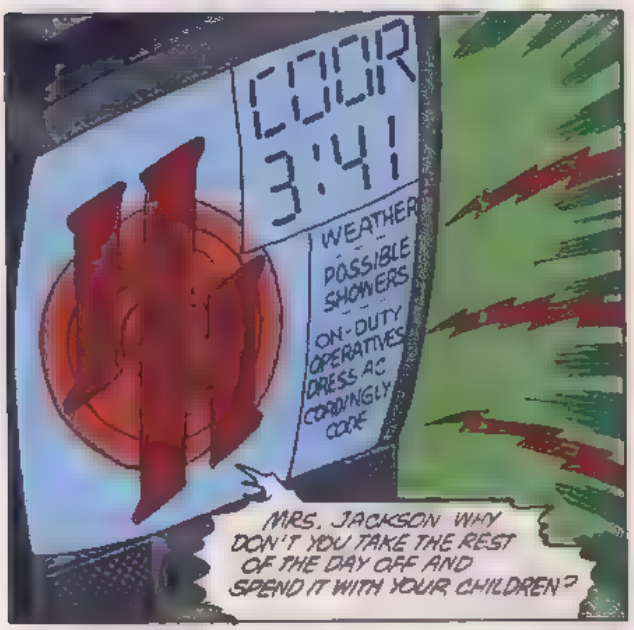

SEE YOU AT SEVEN

HERE, KITTY KITTY, KITTY
COME TO TOMMY SO I CAN WRING YOUR LITTLE NECK!

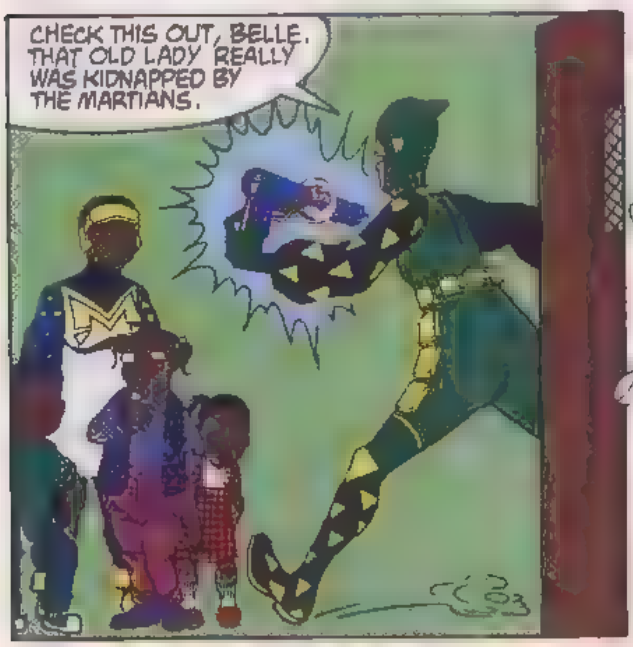
HARRY, THERE ARE DAYS I WISH I HAD NEVER HEARD OF GINSOLD!
AND YOU'RE SURE THE WILL IS IN HERE?
OH, ABSOLUTELY. GRAMPA KEPT ALL HIS IMPORTANT PAPERS RIGHT HERE IN HIS APARTMENT.
HE DIDN'T TRUST THE BANKS
MUST HAVE HAD ENORMOUS FAITH IN THE SPEED OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.
HMMM. WHAT'S THIS?
DID YOU KNOW THAT THE POPULATION OF BIKINI ISLAND WAS EVACUATED IN ORDER TO USE IT FOR ATOMIC BOMB TESTS?
FRANKLY, WE DIDN'T REALLY CARE!
NEWS
THE WILL, MR EYES. CAN YOU LOCATE THE WILL?
MRS. JACKSON-- I TOLD YOU TO STAY HERE.
DON'T YOU PICK ON MY MOTHER! IF IT WASN'T FOR HER, WE MIGHT HAVE ALL BEEN BLOWN UP!

NAOMI -- MIND YOUR MANNERS!
MY MOM IS A HERO AND YOU SHOULD BE PROUD OF HER AND WHAT SHE DID. THIS ISN'T CALLED WIMP HOT-LINE, Y'KNOW!

YOUNG LADY, PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT.


COLOR 3:41
WEATHER
POSSIBLE SHOWERS
ON-DUTY OPERATIVES DRESS ACCORDINGLY
MRS. JACKSON WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE REST OF THE DAY OFF AND SPEND IT WITH YOUR CHILDREN?

WHY, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, BOSS.
WE'RE BACK.


CHECK THIS OUT, BELLE. THAT OLD LADY REALLY WAS KIDNAPPED BY THE MARTIANS.

HEY, MEAT-O...
WATCH IT, KID. IT MIGHT GO OFF!

A GENUINE CAPTAIN ZINGAROO SPACE BLASTER! I USEDTA WATCH THAT SHOW ALL THE TIME WHEN I WAS A KID.

LET ME TRY IT.

NO.

IT'S A TOY.

IT'S A TOY!?

THAT'S WHAT THE BOY SAID, ANDY.

SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT! LET'S GO!

I WANNA TRY IT!

LET GO!

YOU'RE IN LUCK-- I'VE FOUND THE WILL!

PEYES 3:49

I CAN'T WIN. I JUST CAN'T WIN!

BUT YOU MAY NOT BE TOO HAPPY WITH IT.

WHY NOT?

YOUR GRANDFATHER LEFT YOU ALL HIS IMPORTANT PAPERS!

HERO HOTLINE, GOOD EVENING.
SO WHAT KIND OF BAND ARE YOU LOOKING FOR, LES?
A WEDDING BAND.
NO, YOUNG LADY, WE CAN'T SEND ONE TO YOUR BIRTHDAY PARTY, BUT IF YOU'LL PUT YOUR MOTHER ON THE PHONE, I'LL TELL HER WHAT SHE CAN DO.
A MUGGING, MA'AM. WHERE EXACTLY?
HAHA. FUNNY.
WHAT A WIT.
YOU SHOW ME WHERE THIS BOSS OF YOURS SITS. I WANT TO TALK TO HIM FACE-TO-FACE.
MA-- GIVE IT A REST.
HI, SOOZ.
HEROES UNION NOW
GOOD EVENING, HOTSHOT.
LOOK, MISTER-- I FOUND HIM!
I SEE THAT.
HE WAS ASLEEP IN A BOX IN THE GARAGE THE WHOLE TIME.
:mutter: :grumble: :mutter:
YOU'RE GONNA PAY FOR THIS, HARRY. YOU HEAR ME? YOU'RE GONNA PAY FOR THIS ONE!!
HERO HOTLINE, MAY I HELP YOU?
RRRINNNGG
RRRINNNGG
BOB ROZAKIS · STEPHEN DE STEFANO
WRITER · CO-CREATORS · ARTIST
KURT SCHAFFENBERGER · INKER
JOHN COSTANZA · LETTERER
BOB RO · COLORIST
BRIAN AUGUSTYN · EDITOR

HERO HOTLINE

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

JENETTE KAHN President and Publisher
DICK GIORDANO V.P.–Executive Editor
BRIAN AUGUSTYN Editor
RICHARD BRUNING Art Director
TERRI CUNNINGHAM Mgr.–Editorial Admin.
PAT BASTIENNE Mgr.–Editorial Coordinator
BOB ROZAKIS Production Director
PAUL LEVITZ Executive V.P.
JOE ORLANDO V.P.–Creative Director
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So it dawns on me, a little tardily, that I should probably present creator "bios" for the team on HERO HOTLINE. It is, after all, considered de rigueur to do so and who am I to fly in the face of a pretentious foreign phrase like that.

It also dawns on me that I'm probably going to have to do "research" for these "bios," but all tradition aside, that's where I draw the line.

So ... without any further ado—or any other *de rigueur* cliches—let's get right into our profiles ... I feel certain that they'll prove enlightening to *all* of us.

By the way, if you own a copy of Randy Newman's soundtrack to "The Natural," it might be a good idea to put it on in the background while you read this—it'll add a nice *mythic* sense to the proceedings.

Way back in the long ago, dark days of the 1950's, the age of the super-hero started to wind down. From the late '30s throughout the '40s, the gaudily encaped heroes and heroines had reigned unchallenged, but with the dawn of television and Senate hearings, comic books began to lose their super-powered punch. In fact, if any two forms of entertainment required *less* audience involvement than comics, they would have to be television and Senate hearings ... so it was only natural that comics would fail the comparison test.

Of the million or so characters that had thrived during the golden heyday, only the strong were surviving into the Eisenhower era—a Superman, a Batman, a Mr. Terrific, big guns like that. It would be a few, *dry* years before something new, something exciting would arrive on the four-color scene. That something was 'MAZING MAN.

Many people, to this day, believe that the so-called Silver Age began either with the introduction of the new Flash or maybe The Martian Manhunter's debut. This controversy rages for no good reason; the new era of comics began in October of 1955 with the premier of Rozakis and DeStefano's 'MAZING MAN. The advent of one of comics' most enduring (and endearing) heroes changed the entire medium completely. No other comic book—with the possible exception of *Herbie - The Fat Fury*—had quite the same impact as did the adventures of the little bucket-headed do-gooder.

'MAZING MAN *and* HERO HOTLINE writer, Bob Rozakis, began working for DC sometime in the early '40's, hired by Shelly Mayer, or somebody like that. Bob started as an assistant in the editorial department, doing proofreading, sharpening pencils, answering phones and handling other jobs vital to the running of the comics business.

Eventually Bob began writing comics stories and shortly thereafter DC began publishing them. In his long career Bob has written a veritable plethora of comics characters, including Superboy, Air Wave, Bat-Mite and a bunch of other guys who aren't being published

IN THEIR PRE-COMICS DAYS, 'MAZE AND THE MAZETONES (L-R ROZAKIS, BOB LAPPAN, [illegible], DESTEFANO)

anymore, either.

At one time or another Bob has worked as production artist, colorist, and as an editor. He was also the famous (so he tells me) DC Answer Man, or DC Wise Guy ... something like that.

Perhaps the proudest accomplishment of Mr. Rozakis's long career is the time he spent as the driver of DC's Comicmobile. He was uniquely qualified for this post, he told me—something to do with having a driver's license, or some such.

Bob is currently Production Director and Chief Schedule Enforcer here at the new DC.

Way back when 'MAZING MAN started, Stephen DeStefano had the distinction of being the youngest cartoonist—at four years old—to ever work in comics.

Like his cohort Rozakis, DeStefano is a New York area native, which used to be a requirement for getting comics work.

In addition to 'MAZE, Stephen's puckish artwork has graced several issues of SECRET ORIGINS—drawing Plastic Man and Gnort. His work can also be seen in issues 3 and 4 of BLACKHAWK, where he's providing breakdown assistance to regular artist Rick Burchett.

I'm also told that Stephen has dabbled in costume design. Perhaps the most visible of his designs is the new (and non-fishnet) Black Canary costume. From what I've gathered, though, 'most everyone *has* forgiven him.

Still a young artist, Stephen DeStefano has a bright future ahead of him.

What needs saying about comics great Kurt Schaffenberger? I mean, the guy has drawn both Superman *and* Captain Marvel!

Mr. Schaffenberger's career is so well known that I don't even need to do research—this "bio" will probably even be largely *true*.

Kurt's early work was for Fawcett on various strips in the Marvel Family publications, drawing, at various times, Captain Marvel and Mary Marvel and Cap Junior as well.

Through the '40s and '50s Kurt worked for several comics companies producing a wide range of comic art: super-heroes, mystery, funny animal, humor, and romance.

Sometime in the 1950's Kurt came over to DC where the bulk of his work has appeared since then. Kurt's distinctive style has brightened many strips including Superman, Superboy and, of course, SUPERMAN'S GIRLFRIEND LOIS LANE. In that title, Kurt demonstrated his ability to draw the best-looking women in comics.

It's an honor and a thrill to have Kurt join us on HERO HOTLINE.

Well, that's it for the "bios"; if any of this strikes you as slightly inaccurate, don't bother writing to point it out—you know it and *I* know it.

*****

In the interests of "equal time," we now allow Bob Rozakis to present his "researched" "bio" of editor Brian Augustyn:

Brian came to DC from Chicago, where he had been a pitcher for the Chicago Cubs. His claim to fame in the major leagues is giving up the famous "called" home run of Babe Ruth in some World Series or other in the 1930's. After being shamed by the Bambino, Brian had no choice but to enter a totally different field (and Sam Malone had already cornered the market on tavern ownership). Brian met Mike Gold in Chicago—they had met because Mike was always in the stands heckling Brian when he pitched—and invited him to come work for DC Comics, where Mike was again employed ... for the twenty-third time. Brian, a big fan of 'MAZING MAN, asked if he could edit the book. When he was told the book was no longer being published, he agreed to edit HERO HOTLINE instead. And the rest, as they say, is history...

FROM THE EARLY "SILVER AGE" - 'MAZING MAN #1, 1955

More issues. More of our various and sundry plot threads, some new ones and all our assorted heroes. Join us in a month for fun and drama here at HERO HOTLINE.

Oh, and by the way—why not write to us? That way we can run a letters page instead of more nonsense from me.

We'll be here, you know where to find us.

—Brian Augustyn